

GOSV NEWS



The latest from the Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism

November / December 2010

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23.4%

of all Marylanders volunteer. You can make the percentage higher by encouraging your friends and family to serve in your community.

Out of the Ordinary
Volunteer Opportunities

Support the Arts Caroline County Council of Arts

The CCCA needs volunteers to contribute their skills in graphic design, lighting and sound and many other areas. [Learn More.](#)

Make Wishes Come True

Make-A-Wish Foundation of the Mid-Atlantic

With volunteers from 18 to 84 who live and work in the local areas, Make-A-Wish has volunteer opportunities with commitments as little as a few hours a month. [Find your](#)

The holidays have arrived! This is a great time of year to savor the time spent with friends and loved ones. One of the best ways to spend time together is by volunteering with people you know.

Invite your friends to join you for an afternoon of volunteering and then meet up at a local hotspot afterwards to socialize. If you're hosting guests this season, consider collecting canned goods for a food bank donation, in lieu of host/hostess gifts.

And don't forget that you can always contact your closest volunteer center or look online for a wide variety of local opportunities that fit your schedule and interests.

Give a little time to help those around you and feel the warmth it brings to your own life. Isn't that what the holidays are all about?

Have a great holiday season!

The Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism

Maryland Awarded \$165,000 in Federal Funds to Mobilize Volunteers

In August, Maryland was awarded \$165,000 by the Corporation for National and Community Service as part of the Volunteer Generation Fund. The new fund was created as a result of the Serve America Act and was awarded to 19 states nationwide to recruit, manage, and retain volunteers.



When Maryland decided to apply for the federal aid, a statewide committee was formed consisting of representatives from the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives, Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism, Maryland Nonprofits, Jewish Volunteerism Connection, and the State's 14 volunteer centers. Local needs and best practices for engaging citizens in volunteerism were considered when creating the proposal.

Maryland plans to offer six sub-grants of \$25,000 each for volunteer centers to increase their ability to recruit and retain volunteers in diverse opportunities. There is an emphasis on engaging youth, people with disabilities, and adults 55 and over in service. Once awarded, the sub-grantees will assess their local volunteer and nonprofit needs to increase their ability to sustain diverse partnerships while building internal capacity.

[local contact.](#)

Light Up A Home Jewish Foundation for Group Homes

Super-charge your Hanukkah experience by visiting one of 21 Group Homes in Gaithersburg, Potomac, Rockville, Silver Spring that supports 4 to 6 adult residents with developmental disabilities; December 1-8. [Find out how to volunteer here.](#)



[Check out our video feature of Ronald Dailey, an AmeriCorps member with A STAR! in Western Maryland.](#)

Additionally, the funds will support volunteer management training for nonprofit staff conducted by [Volunteer Maryland](#). Five full-day trainings for up to 30 participants will focus on intensive staff development for volunteer managers with a focus on local needs assessments and training curricula.

The Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism is currently reviewing applications from volunteer centers for the sub-grants and plans to announce the recipients by the end of 2010. In Maryland, the Volunteer Generation Fund investment in volunteer centers and nonprofit trainings has the potential to reach over five million Marylanders by the end of the three-year project.

Insights for Grant Seekers

The Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism (GOSV) is the funding agency for the AmeriCorps*State federal grant program. In addition, the GOSV manages several other smaller grant programs for volunteer centers and community-based agencies that provide resources for local service projects, reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities, professional staff development, and more. In all, the office reviews about 60 grant applications each year; and the grants awarded range in size from \$500 to \$500,000.

Needless to say, the GOSV grant review teams see a wide variety of grant applications each year. From that vantage point, reviewers provide the following advice for grant-seekers:

1. Start with the national connection

All grant applications start with the same question: what is the community problem that this grant will help solve? The best grant applications provide a national (or even international) connection to their community problem. For a local tree-planting project's application, the grant writer will include an overview of the environmental challenges facing the river where the trees will be planted, the Chesapeake Bay where the river flows, the Bay watershed, and so on. [Continue reading article.](#)

Spotlight on: ShoreCAN Volunteer Center

Nestled within a non-descript Salisbury business park exists a true gem for residents of Wicomico, Worcester, and Somerset counties. Inside Suite 401, connections are being made, ideas are developing, and steps are being taken to expand the ability to connect people who care with causes that matter. The entity leading these efforts is ShoreCAN Volunteer Center.

ShoreCAN shares many commonalities with the other volunteer centers around the state. It exists as a matchmaker for organizations seeking volunteers and potential volunteers with a desire to serve. Its resources are limited and it has seen its share of hard times. In an era when many nonprofits are struggling, ShoreCAN, formerly operated through Salisbury University, was in need of additional attention. That's when the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore, Inc. (CFES) offered their support. [Continue reading article.](#)



Volunteer Coordinator, Heather Towers

Commission Corner: Tonja Lark

Tonja Lark currently serves on the Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism and is president and founder of Daughter For The Day, Inc.

Tonja Lark was shopping at a local grocery store when she encountered an older female sitting alone on a bench outside of the store, her groceries at her side. Tonja asked if she had someone to assist her, and when she replied that she was waiting for the late bus, Tonja decided to take action. She immediately went to her car, loaded in the groceries and drove her home. Tonja reflected on her relationship with her own "Nana," recalled their happy outings, and decided something needed to be done for other seniors in need of support.

Out of this experience, Daughter For The Day, Inc. was created. Volunteer "daughters" and "sons" would make visits to older adults in nursing homes and hospitals, take them shopping, to church, and provide assurance in knowing that there would be someone to accompany them to medical appointments and generally look out for their well-being. For adults facing cancer and dialysis treatments, they no longer have to wait hours for transportation, and have the comfort of knowing someone is there to hold their hands and help them through. There is no way to describe the look on their faces when they see their volunteers waiting to offer assistance. The older adults feel so secure; they never want the outings to end.



Photo credit:

www.daughterfortheday.org

Daughter For The Day, Inc. serves almost 1,100 older Marylanders and is constantly receiving more requests. Tonja receives calls from major cities across the country asking for expansion of the program. Local youth in need of community service hours help out in the office and sometimes accompany "sons" and "daughters" on outings. Both the participants and the volunteers delight in the experience and feel the impact on one another. Some seniors have expressed a new desire for living. One "daughter" who did not have a close relationship with her own mother, developed such a comfort with her older adult, that she invited her to attend her Doctorate Degree graduation.

Tonja's organization is constantly exploring creative ways to stimulate and engage the minds of the participants. Outside of individual outings, they are brought together periodically for special events, like a crab feast in Montgomery County, and the Southern Prince Georges County Senior Picnic, where approximately 400 were served by the Daughter For The Day volunteers. This Thanksgiving, they will partner with Mt. Jezreel Baptist Church in Silver Spring to provide 350-400 older Marylanders Thanksgiving dinner.

One the most spectacular events of Daughter For The Day was "The Second Time Around" senior prom. As a result of significant community and business sponsorships, older adults were made over by make-up artists and beauty salons, barbers, and clothing stores, then transported in 23 white stretch limousines and handicapped vans to the event. Local law enforcement, military, and fraternal organizations serves as escorts down the red carpet- with wheelchairs, canes, walkers, and oxygen in tow- while six photographers snapped pictures everywhere. Many said they felt like a movie stars. To top off the evening a king and queen were crowned.

If it were not for the dedicated volunteers who get so much enjoyment and satisfaction from seeing the smiles on the faces of those who are struggling with life, Daughters For The Day would not exist. Tonja's motto is "if I can help someone along the way, then my living shall not be in vain."

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